

Opening Statement of the Honorable Joseph R. Pitts
Health Subcommittee Hearing on “Examining the Medicare Part D Medication Therapy
Management Program”
October 21, 2015

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today’s hearing will examine the Medication Therapy Management (MTM) program, which is part of the Medicare Part D prescription drug program. The Part D program was established as part of the Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) in 2003.

MMA required Medicare Part D prescription drug plans to include medication therapy management services delivered by a qualified healthcare professional, including pharmacists, beginning in 2006.

Medications can save or improve lives, but taken incorrectly or in excess, they can make patients worse. With thousands of prescription drugs on the market, frequently no one prescriber, caregiver or manufacturer knows the total picture for each patient.

MTM services target beneficiaries who have multiple chronic conditions, such as diabetes, asthma, hypertension, and congestive heart failure. Such beneficiaries likely take multiple medications and are likely to incur very expensive annual medical costs. The pharmacists can play an important part in MTM. We will be hearing from pharmacists as they describe their role and apply their extensive medication knowledge as medication experts with the intent of improving patient health outcomes.

Medication management is vital to ensuring that covered Part D or prescription drugs are appropriately used to optimize therapeutic outcomes. As we have heard from our senior constituents, they rely on the Part D program and Congress has a responsibility to ensure that the MTM program is working as intended.

Today we have two panels, including the Administration’s witness from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Director of Delivery System Reform. Additionally, we will hear from a panel of experts and stakeholders as to their ideas and recommendations for possible improvement in this evolving program.